

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2124

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 10279

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IT, PO

SUBJECT: FORTHCOMING ARTUNES VISIT TO PORTUGAL AND PORTUGAL
AT THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL

1. MFA'S OFFICER IN CHARGE OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS (TORELLA) CONFIRMED TO US JULY 15 THAT PORTUGUESE FOREIGN MINISTER ARTUNES IS STILL SCHEDULED TO PAY A BRIEF, ONE-DAY VISIT TO ROME ON JULY 18. ARTUNES IS MAKING THE TRIP AT THE PORTUGUESE INITIATIVE IN THE FRAMEWORK OF ITALIAN-PORTUGUESE BILATERAL RELATIONS AND IN CONNECTION WITH ITALY'S ROLE AS PRESIDENT OF THE EC. TORELLA INDICATED THAT THE ITALIANS ARE NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE VISIT, WHICH THEY HAD EARLIER POSTPONED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

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2. DURING HIS STAY, ARTUNES IS EXPECTED TO HAVE FORMAL

MEETINGS ONLY WITH FOREIGN MINISTER RUMOR. BECAUSE OF A PREVIOUS COMMITMENT, RUMOR IS EXPECTED TO HAVE ANOTHER OFFICIAL HOST THE LUNCHEON FOR ARTUNES. ARTUNES WILL PROBABLY USE THE OCCASION OF HIS VISIT TO MAKE A STRONG PITCH FOR EC ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL. (TORELLA INDICATED HE STILL EXPECTS THE EC TO MEET ON THIS SUBJECT ON JULY 22, BARRING A CHANGE RESULTING FROM THE ARTUNES-RUMOR TALKS.)

3. TORELLA SHOWED US A STATEMENT ON PORTUGUESE ASSISTANCE WHICH THE ITALIANS WILL BE MAKING AT THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL IN THEIR ROLE AS PRESIDENT OF THE EC. IN THE DOCUMENT IT IS NOTED THAT THE SITUATION IN PORTUGAL HAS DETERIORATED SINCE JULY 9 AND THAT RECENT DECISIONS PRESAGE THE END OF PLURALISTIC DEMOCRACY AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF A MILITARY DECTATORSHIP THERE. IT SUGGESTS THAT THE TIME HAS COME FOR A FRANK EXPOSITION TO THE PORTUGUESE OF THE EC ATTITUDE CONCERNING THE CURRENT DRAFT, INCLUDING THE NEGATIVE IMPACT IT HAS ON PUBLIC OPINION IN THE MEMBER STATES.

4. ACCORDING TO TORELLA, THE FRENCH ARE THE MOST PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE SITUATION IN PORTUGAL AND WISH TO TAKE A WAIT AND SEE ATTITUDE ABOUT ECONOMIC AID AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE NINE GENERALLY FEEL THAT THE EC SHOULD GO FORWARD WITH PLANS FOR ASSISTANCE. TORELLA NOTED THAT THE GERMANS SEEM THE LEAST PESSIMISTIC OF ALL THE EC COUNTRIES ABOUT THE PRESENT TREND IN PORTUGAL. VOLPE

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